

PATENT SPECIFICATION

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(54) IMPROVEMENTS IN OR RELATING TO IMPLEMENTS FOR HANDLING ARTICLES

- (71) I, ALFRED GEORGE COTTON, of 30, Culford Avenue, Totton, Hampshire, a British Subject, do hereby declare the invention for which I pray that a patent may be granted to me, and the method by which it is to be performed, to be particularly described in and by the following statement:—
- This invention relates to implements for handling articles, and is primarily concerned with the hygienic handling of articles of food, for example, cakes.
- According to the present invention, an implement for handling articles comprises a pair of pockets joined together by a portion of flexible material, each pocket being formed so as to receive at least one digit of a single hand, whereby the article to be handled is held between the pockets by said digits, said implement being formed from a strip, the ends of which are doubled back and attached by crimping to the remainder of the strip so as to form the pockets.
- The implement can be disposable if desired.
- The implement of the invention can also be used for handling heated articles, or for handling articles of medical equipment.
- An embodiment of the invention will now be described by way of example only with reference to the accompanying drawings, wherein:—
- Figure 1 is a side view in elevation, of one implement,
- Figure 2 is a section, taken on the lines II—II of Figure 1,
- Figure 3 is a view in perspective of the implement, and
- Figure 4 is a modification of the implement.
- With reference to Figures 1 to 3, a disposable implement 1 for handling cakes 2 comprises a pair of pockets 3 joined together by a portion 4 of flexible material, each pocket being formed so as to receive at least one digit of a single-hand, whereby the cake 2 to be handled is held, with a grip-like action, between the pockets 3 by the digits. (As shown in Figure 3).

In further detail, the implement 1 is made of paper. The paper used is the same as that used to manufacture paper handkerchiefs. The implement 1 is formed from a strip of paper, the ends of which are doubled back and attached to the remainder by crimping 5 so as to form the pockets 3. Thus the pockets 3 are integral with the central portion 4.

As viewed in Figure 1, the "left hand" pocket 3 is formed so as to receive the thumb of a person's right hand and the "right hand" pocket 3 the index finger thereof. In operation, to pick up the cake 2, the thumb and index finger are first slipped into the pockets 3 and these digits then moved towards each other so as to deform the implement 1 whereby it takes up the "U"-like plan form shown in Figure 3. The cake 2 is then picked up by gripping it between the covered digits so that it may be transferred into a bag in a hygienic manner.

If several cakes or other articles of food are to be transferred to the bag the implement 1 is retained on the digits until the transfer is complete. It may then be disposed of, for example by dropping it into a waste bin.

Figure 4 illustrates a modified form of implement. In this modification the "left hand" pocket 3a of the implement 1a is formed so as to receive the thumb of a person's right hand, and the "right hand" pocket 3a, all four fingers of the same hand.

The implement 1a may be further modified so that it has two identical pockets 3a, each identical to the "right hand" pocket 3a of Figure 4. This modification allows a person's left hand to be used for handling an article. Two implements of this modification also allows both hands to be used for handling an article, one implement on each hand.

The material of the implement may be varied according to requirements. For example where heated articles are to be handled, implements according to the invention may be made of heat insulating material.

With reference to Figure 2, to provide firm contact between the implement of the invention and the article being handled, operative portions of the implement may be provided with a plurality of discrete projections 10 of dimple-like form. Alternatively, discrete ribs may be provided.

Implements according to the invention allow a person to handle an article with a degree of sensitivity unobtainable with tongs or similar handling tools, which often damage the articles handled by them.

Implements according to the invention may be used to handle a variety of articles. Not only articles of food but also other articles which must be handled in a hygienic manner, such as items of medical equipment. In such cases, the implements may be sterilised.

Implements according to the invention may also be used in industry, for example in handling metal components without transferring moisture or grease from the hand to the components. In such cases the implements may be made of absorbent material.

Implements according to the invention may be disposed in packs, preferably of the "pull-out" type as used to hold paper handkerchiefs, or perforated rolls. The portion 4 could be recessed on one or both sides to provide increased flexibility at the centre of the implement. In cross-section (as in Figure 2) the pockets preferably have one side of greater dimension than the opposite side so that a pocket is readily formed.

WHAT I CLAIM IS:—

1. An implement for handling articles comprising a pair of pockets joined together by a portion of flexible material, each

pocket being formed so as to receive at least one digit of a single hand, whereby the article to be handled is held between the pockets by said digits, said implement being formed from a strip, the ends of which are doubled back and attached by crimping to the remainder of the strip so as to form the pockets.

2. An implement as claimed in Claim 1, in which the pockets are dimensioned to each receive one digit.

3. An implement as claimed in Claim 1, in which one pocket is dimensioned to receive one digit and the other pocket is larger to receive more than one digit.

4. An implement as claimed in any one of Claims 1 to 3, in which the material of the implement is heat insulating.

5. An implement as claimed in any one of Claims 1 to 3, in which the material of the implement is paper.

6. An implement as claimed in any one of Claims 1 to 3, in which the material of the implement is absorbent.

7. An implement as claimed in any one of Claims 1 to 6, in which the operative surface of the pockets are provided with projections.

8. An implement as claimed in Claim 7, in which the projections are dimples or discrete ribs.

9. An implement substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to Figures 1, 2 and 3 of the accompanying drawings, or as modified by Figure 4.

10. A pack of implements according to any preceding claim.

11. A perforated roll of implements according to any of Claims 1 to 9.

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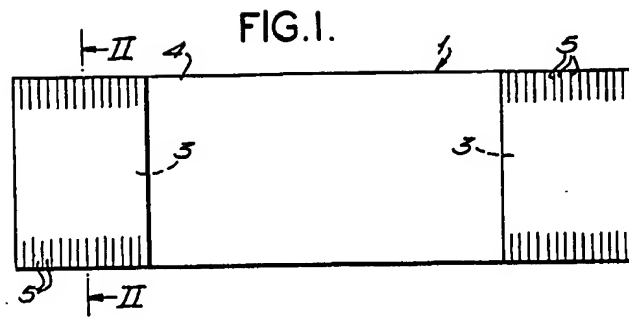


FIG.2.

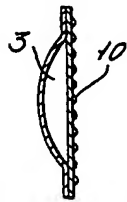


FIG.3.

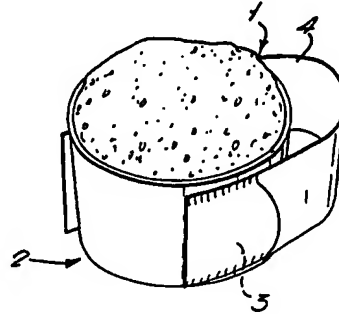


FIG.4.

